

## think it, want it, get it by eddiefuckinkaspbrak

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**Genre:** Alternate Universe, Bill is the CEO of a magazine, Eddie is the agony aunt, Fluff, Forbidden Love, Hand Jobs, Light Angst, Love Confessions, M/M, Office Romance, Secret Relationship, Smut, the losers all have their own columns and departments

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**Summary:**

Bill is the CEO of one of New York's most successful magazines. The only thing missing from it is an advice column. Enter Eddie Kaspbrak. Immediately, everyone is won over by the new agony aunt, most importantly the magazine's designer, Richie Tozier. Too bad Bill ordered him to stay away from Eddie.

Not that it had ever stopped him before.

# 1. it's friday i'm in love

## Author's Note:

A new multi chapter fic because I have no self control! Enjoy! Be sure to follow me on my new Tumblr since my old blog got terminated. @eddiefuckinkaspbrak :)))

As Richie Tozier stepped out of his workplace building at 5pm on the dot Friday afternoon, it was with the knowledge that he was going out partying with his best friend in less than an hour. Bev, his best friend and also his colleague, and he had been planning this night out for over a month, and Richie would be damned if he wasn't going to make it one to remember.

It had been a long week, which only added to Richie's excitement to let loose and enjoy himself, maybe even get laid if he played his cards right. It wasn't that he didn't enjoy his job, in fact, he loved his job. He got to work alongside his group of friends from childhood in a job that he adored. He was the designer of New York's most successful magazine. ***Runner Up***. Bill, his long time friend was the CEO and founder of the business and he recruited his school friends to help him make the business the best it could be.

And it was, the best it could be. That is, until Bill decided that they were missing something important, something that he couldn't put his finger on. Richie had tried to help him out with his problem, listing off all of the columns that made a monthly appearance in their issues. Fashion which was Bev's area, Economy which was Ben, Sports fell under Mike, Stan was in control of Business and Richie was the one who put it all together. They also had an entertainment section that everyone contributed to as well as a real life column.

Yet Bill was still set on something being missing. The inner conflict in his friends brain had been going on for months, and this week it had finally reached its epic conclusion.

"Advice!" Bill blurted out during their weekly meeting, causing everyone to look up from their notepads and frown at the CEO. "It's

what we're missing. An advice column. All the current magazines have them, and the younger generation lap them up. It's a perfect way to keep us on top."

There was a short silence from around the table until Richie cleared his throat, running his fingers through his locks and making eye contact with Bill, "And who's going to run the advice column? We're already so swamped as it is big Bill, we can't take on anymore new projects."

Bill shook his head a few times, a grin still plastered on his face, "Oh no, I'm not asking any of you to pick it up. I know you're already so busy. I'm hiring someone new for the job."

That caught everyone's attention and the board room erupted in hushed whispered. Richie couldn't even remember the last time Bill hired someone outwith their friend group to take on a column of their own. Sure they all had their own teams who contributed to making the magazine work, but this was different. "Are you sure?"

"Of course I'm sure. I'll be running interviews this week and if any of them are suitable, they'll be starting next Monday!" Bill clapped his hands as though he had just solved world hunger before he spun on his heel and made his way to the door. "Oh and Richie?"

"Mhm?"

"No sleeping with the newbie."

That conversation had happened a week ago, and Bill informed them less than two hours ago that he had found someone and that they would start first thing Monday morning. Just before Bill left for the day, he had looked directly at Richie and reminded him that he was forbidden from engaging in any kind of sexual or romantic acts with the new advice columnist. Richie had rolled his eyes and agreed without a second thought, after all, there was probably no way he'd be attracted to them anyway.

"Richie!" Bev snapped her fingers in front of his face, pulling him out of his thoughts as he turned to face her. "You were daydreaming again. Come on, we need to catch the cab to the pub, our Friday

night partying starts right now!"

Just like that, all thoughts of Bill and the new guy were gone from Richie's mind and he was piling into the cab, ready to get completely smashed with his best friend and forget all about work.

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It was just after nine, and Richie was on his fifth vodka and sixth shot when things started to pick up. At first, they had decided to take it slow, not wanting to get too drunk too early and have to head home. Now however, the pub was starting to get busy, the music was starting to get good and happy hour had officially begun which meant half price on all drinks!

"Excuse me!" A voice called from behind him and Richie turned his head around to find the owner. He expected some guy who was pushing his way to the front to get his girlfriend some fruity drink, but what he got was something different entirely. Instead of some large douchebag, the owner of the voice was, in Richie's opinion, an angel. He was shorter than Richie, with brownish-blond hair and, from what Richie could see he had grey-blue eyes. He was absolutely stunning. "Do I have something on my face?"

Richie's face flushed as he realised he had been staring at the gorgeous stranger for too long and he cleared his throat, shaking his head, "Not at all, gorgeous. How may I be of assistance?"

The stranger raised a single eyebrow, but Richie caught the slight flush of his cheeks at the term of endearment. He glanced just behind Richie, looking at the bar, "I've been trying to get a drink for about twenty minutes, but people keep pushing in front of me. Disadvantages of being short, I guess. Would you let me past?"

Holding a hand up, Richie shook his head and shot the stranger a grin, "No need, I'm just about to order myself. What's your poison?"

"Vodka lemon," the stranger replied, reaching into his pocket for what Richie assumed was cash, and he held out a hand to stop him. The stranger looked back up, his grey eyes meeting Richie's, causing his stomach to swoop, "What?"

"It's on me. Maybe we can take a seat over at that table where my friend is sitting?" Richie offered and the strangers pursed his lips, glancing in the direction before he nodded his head. "What's your name, cutie?"

The stranger grinned, another flush on his cheeks, "Eddie, and you?"

"Richie. Nice to meet you, Eddie."

Eddie. The name suited him more than he ever thought it would, and Richie was pretty sure he was a little bit in love with this cute stranger. He held up a finger and turned to the bar, yelling to the bartender his order of a vodka lemon and another vodka coke for himself. Since he was a regular, and more than familiar with bartenders, they served him before any of the other rude, impatient customers. Drinks in hand, he turned back to Eddie, passing him his drink with a playful wink and leading him over to the table.

Bev blinked at Richie as they approached the table and with one single look, she got the message, standing up and disappearing into the crowd. "So, Eddie," Richie started as they took a seat. "I haven't seen you around here before. Are you new to the city?"

"Not necessarily," Eddie answered, nursing his drink. "I moved here a few months ago, but things have been...difficult to say the least. Not to worry though, I've found myself a job I'm sure I'll be good at and on my way up. I was recommended this place by a friend. He was meant to meet me here but had to cancel, but I was already here so I thought why not get a drink."

Richie couldn't help but lean in a little closer so their sides were practically touching. It was hot in the bar, with all the body heat, but there could have been a heatwave and it still wouldn't have made Richie move away from Eddie. It was like they had...connected. Just like that. "Are you glad you stayed for this drink?"

With a shrug, a smirk on those perfect lips, Eddie leaned in closer, "I guess you'll have keep talking and find out."

Luckily, for Eddie, talking was Richie's forte. They talked, and they drank, and they talked some more. They talked about school, friends,

hobbies, favourite tv shows, books and movies. Normally, if Richie was chatting to a guy or a girl, he had no real interest in any conversation, just wanting to skip ahead to the main event, but he *wanted* to get to know Eddie. He wanted to know his favourite colour, his favourite food...all that stuff.

By the time midnight rolled around, they were pressed up against one another in the booth, Eddie's legs hooked over Richie's thighs with his head on his shoulder. "I don't think I've had this much fun on a night out...ever," Eddie mumbled, giggling a little. Richie swore right then that he would do whatever it took so that he could hear that giggle again.

"Seriously?" He breathed back, raising an eyebrow as he looked down at him. Eddie shook his head, sitting up which caused their faces to become mere inches from each other. "That's...a real shame, Eds."

"Eds?" Eddie whispered, so close that Richie could feel his breath against his lips.

Richie nodded his head, reaching a hand up to push some of Eddie's curls back behind his ear and out of his face, "A nickname, it suits you."

They fell into a comfortable, yet heated silence, staring at each other as though they were waiting for the other to make the first move. Just as Richie was hyping himself up to close the remaining distance, Eddie bit the bullet first. He leaned forward, closing the distance and pressing his lips to Richie's in a short, yet mind blowing kiss. The second their lips touched, Richie felt as though he had been electrocuted. Shocks went up his arm and his lips were tingling as Eddie broke the kiss, moving back just a little.

A heated gaze was exchanged between them, but only for a second before they both moved in at the same time, lips colliding in a much more passionate, deep, kiss than the first one. Eddie's fingers made their way into Richie's hair, which caused him to moan into his mouth. He placed his hands on Eddie's slender waist, manoeuvring him so he was straddling his lap in the booth. The kiss was like no other kiss Richie had ever felt before, and from just that one kiss, he

could already feel his pants get considerably tighter.

Needing to breath, the kiss was broken and Richie moved his lips down Eddie's smooth jaw to his neck and under his shirt. He grazed his teeth over the skin of his collarbone, extracting a shiver from the younger man and he bit down lightly, sucking a hickey into a place that could be easily hidden if needed.

"God, get a room!" The voice of Bev broke through Richie's lustful haze and he pulled back, his eyes settling on his best friend who was standing at the edge of the booth, arms crossed and jacket over her arm. "They're closing up soon. I'm going to the club, I'll see you tomorrow?"

Richie nodded his head, trying to catch his breath as Bev walked off, disappearing out the door and into the street. He looked up at Eddie, whose cheeks were flushed dark in embarrassment at being caught. Taking a risk, he reached down and brushed his thumb over the skin of Eddie's wrist. "Come home with me?"

Eddie paused, and Richie was certain that he was about to say no, when he smiled and leaned into his ear. "Thought you'd never ask."

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The sun shining through his bedroom window is what woke Richie up the following morning, head pounding and throat dry, "Ugh, too bright." He rolled over, his arm flopping over the stomach of Eddie, who was just waking up himself. The sight of him, from what Richie could see however, almost made him want to tackle him back into bed, but as he shifted, the pain in his head got worse and he groaned.

"Told you to close them last night," Eddie muttered. "But you said it would be fine. Regretting your decision now, huh Tozier?"

Richie snorted into his pillow, one arm reaching out for his glasses and he slid them up his nose. Now that he could see, he turned to face Eddie once more, grinning at his tussled morning hair. "Morning to you too, gorgeous."

Eddie smiled softly and rolled over so they were facing one another,

noses inches apart, “Morning, how are you feeling?”

“Like death,” Richie muttered, rubbing his temple. “How are you so fresh?” He asked, frowning a little. They were both relatively drunk the previous night, there was no way he was hungover and Eddie was not.

“You had like, five vodkas before I showed up, remember?” Eddie clarified and the memory returned, causing another groan to leave his lips.

He tried to get up again, but failed as a nauseous feeling took over him that time, “I’d offer to cook you breakfast, but...I can’t move.”

Eddie laughed, stretching out on the bed before he sat up and ran his fingers through his hair. “It’s okay, I actually have to leave soon as I promised my friend I’d go shopping with him.”

Richie pouted at the thought of Eddie leaving so soon, but of course if he had pre-arranged plans, he wasn’t about to stand in the way of those. They had only met the previous night after all. Not wanting Eddie to walk out of his life completely though, Richie forced himself to sit up, fighting through the headache and nausea. “Can I see you again?”

“You want to see me again?” Eddie asked, confusion written on his face and Richie nodded, fast and serious. “I’ll give you my number? You can call...or text me when you’re not looking and feeling like the walking dead.”

“That would be very much appreciated, Eds.” Richie grinned, watching as Eddie scribbled his digits onto a scrap piece of paper and slid it under his nightstand. “I’ll text you later, yeah?”

Eddie smiled, slipping out of bed and pulling his clothes back on. He walked around to Richie’s side, leaning down to press a gentle kiss to his cheek, moving his lips to his ear, “Can’t wait.”

He left a few moments later, closing the curtains on his way and Richie managed to fall back asleep. When he awoke, it was after two in the afternoon and he was feeling a little better than he had earlier



that morning. His bed still smelled like Eddie, a mix of strawberries and mint, it was heavenly. Once he forced himself out of bed and into the shower, Richie settled on the couch and sent Eddie a message.

**I had a great time last night, Eds - Richie.**

No less than two minutes later, his phone pinged with a response.

*Me too, I hope we can do it again soon? - Eddie*

They spent the rest of the weekend texting back and forth and calling in the evenings to just....chat. He had known Eddie for less than seventy-two hours but already Richie knew that he was something special, something worth keeping.

When he arrived to work on Monday morning, it was with a spring in his step and a smile on his face. He had almost completely forgotten about the new advice columnist that Bill had hired and was only reminded when Ben tapped him on the shoulder on the way to the board room.

Everyone was sitting, chatting about the weekend when Bill came in, a huge grin on his face. "Morning guys, as you know I have hired a new member of staff to take over the advice column for the magazine. He is really excited to be a part of the team and I want you all to make him feel welcome."

What followed seemed to happen in slow motion. Bill stepped out of the way to reveal the new member of staff and Richie swore that the chair he was sitting in collapsed beneath him, sending him falling through the building to the ground below.

"I want you all to meet Eddie Kaspbrak, our new advice columnist."

*Oh shit.*

## **2. listen to your heart**

Eddie had been dealing with so much bad luck over the past few months, it was quite difficult to believe that he had not only bagged himself a decent, well paying job, but also met a man that he could really see himself falling for. Even at the mere thought of Richie, and the night they had spent together, brought a smile onto his face. Not only that, but they had been texting and calling each other over the whole weekend.

He should have been aware that everything was just too good to be true, and he soon realised this was the case as he stepped into the boardroom at his new job to end up face to face with Richie himself. At first, he was happy, parting his lips in a move to greet the man he had spent all weekend getting to know, but Richie shook his head a little, shutting him down immediately.

“Eddie,” Bill, the CEO of the magazine he had been hired by, turned to him. He had a smile on his face, the same one he was wearing when Eddie arrived for the interview. “Let me introduce you to the team. We are all friends from high school, but don’t let that put you off, we have all been looking forward to having you here. Right guys?”

Everyone around the boardroom table nodded, but Eddie couldn’t take his eyes off of Richie. Richie who was trying to avoid his gaze as though he was some sort of dirty mistake. So much for thinking he had finally found someone worth keeping.

He hadn’t even realised that Bill was still talking, going around the table to introduce everyone and the departments that they ran. He only really registered what was being said when Bill mentioned Richie name, “and this is Richie, the designer of the whole thing. All the departments hand their columns to Richie and he puts it all together into the magic you see in the store!”

“Great,” Eddie managed to force out, hoping that his voice didn’t sound too bitter. “It’s really nice to meet you all, and I hope we can all get on really well.”

Bill called the end of the meeting and the team started packing up their binders, all planning to head back to their respective corners. Eddie wasn't sure where his corner was, and as Richie stood up to make his way over, he turned around to Bill, only to be greeted by his smile. "This way Eddie, I'll show you to your corner."

Completely ignoring Richie, Eddie stepped past him and followed Bill out of the conference room and towards a desk that was in a spacious area of the office. The area was already stocked with whatever he may or may not need, and sitting in on top was a single piece of paper with a list of questions on it. He reached down and picked it up, his eyes running over the words there. "My first set of questions?"

"Yeah, all of us in the office came together to create a few, just to get you off the ground you know? Once people see how good you are, the questions will come flying in." Bill grinned, planting a hand on his shoulder. "I have to get back to my office, but if there is anything you need, anything at all, please just come and speak to me."

Eddie nodded his head and took a seat as Bill walked away from the computer. He had only been reading over the questions for a few moments before someone cleared their throat from next to him. For a moment, Eddie thought it might have been Richie, and he wasn't sure how to deal with that yet, but luckily he didn't have to.

Mike, the sports department head, was smiling down at him. "Welcome to the team," he greeted, holding out his hand. Eddie shook it and returned his smile. "Usually, each member of the team takes turns making coffees and tea. It's my turn today. Can I get you anything?"

"Oh-oh a cup of tea would be lovely," Eddie smiled, nodding his head. "Thank you, Mike."

Shaking his head, Mike stepped back, "Really, it's not a problem Eddie. We're all friends here. If you need anything, please just come and ask. We're all willing to help each other."

Just as Mike was about to walk away, Eddie called him back, "Wait-wait Mike. Can I- can I ask you something?" He asked, biting his lip and Mike nodded, turning back and pulling up a seat, giving Eddie

his full attention. “What- What can you tell me about Richie Tozier?”

“Richie Tozier? The designer?” Mike asked, blinking a few times. “Well, he’s sort of the comedian of the group, very charismatic, a bit goof but really really amazing. He’s never one to let down a friend in need, put it like that. We’ve always been close, friends since High School, just like Bill said.”

Eddie nibbled on the inside of his cheek and he sighed. The Richie that Mike was describing was the same Richie that Eddie had gotten to know over the weekend. So why was he being so distant with him? He looked back up at Mike and smiled “Thanks, Mike. I was just wondering, he seemed really quiet earlier.”

Mike hummed and nodded, “He did, sometimes he gets like that, with his ADHD and all. Some days are better than most, but don’t tell him I told you. It’s not something he likes to uh, talk about a lot.’ He stood up and put the chair back. “I’ll be right back with the tea.”

The day passed rather quickly after that. Mike returned with his tea before going back to his desk and Eddie buried his head into the questions, trying to word the answers just right so people would want to ask him *more*. His experience with terrible relationships, bad home life and just overall bad luck in general was really coming in handy with this job.

Sooner than Eddie expected, the clock on his computer was reading five, and everyone was starting to pack up around them, wishing everyone goodnight. He sighed and started packing up himself, swinging his bag over his shoulder as he headed towards the lift. He didn’t get very far though, as he walked past a supply closet he felt a hand wrap around his wrist and tug him inside.

“Hey!” Eddie gasped, his free hand rising to hit whoever it was who had pulled him into a closet, when he stopped, realising who it was. “Richie? What the fuck.” He ripped his hand out of Richie’s grasp and moved to the door, but Richie stopped him. “Let me go, for fucks sake.”

“Wait, Eds just listen to me okay?” Richie moved over, blocking the exit more and Eddie crossed his arms. “Look, I- I’m sorry for the cold

shoulder okay? Just- fuck. It's complicated."

That made Eddie scoff and try to get past Richie once more but he was stopped. "Let me go, Richie. I don't need to stand here and listen to your excuses. What is it huh? Are you in some long term relationship with someone here? Is that it? Was I just your little side piece?"

Richie's eyes widened, "What- no! No Eds that's not what this is at all!" He shook his head. "Please just- calm down okay, calm down and let me explain." Eddie looked at Richie carefully before he stepped back and nodded, gesturing for him to continue. Richie exhaled and ran a hand through his hair, "Okay, okay. So...fuck."

"Get on with it Richie, I don't have all day," Eddie sighed. He really didn't. He was starving and he really just wanted to go home, eat, have a shower and *sleep*.

Nodding his head, Richie sucked in another breath. "Right, so last week yeah? Bill told us that he was hiring a newbie to do the advice column and everyone was really excited because it's been so long since someone new had been hired. After the meeting though, Bill told me that no matter what, I wasn't to engage in any sexual or romantic relationship with the newbie, and I agreed." He sighed and looked at Eddie with a kicked puppy look. "Then I met you at the bar last night and...and fuck Eddie you- you literally swept me off my feet."

A blush rose up on Eddie's cheeks and he stared at Richie, slowly processing the new information, "So- you weren't ghosting me this morning over anything other than you didn't want Bill to know we already hooked up?" He asked and Richie nodded his head. "Well...I mean it's not your fault? We met before you knew I got the job, Bill can't really say anything. I'm sure he'll understand?"

"No- no," Richie shook his head. "No he won't understand. If- if he finds out then I'll probably lose my job," Richie sighed and looked away from Eddie. "It's not the first time I've engaged in an office rendezvous." He chuckled.

Eddie was quiet for a moment before he spoke up, "What happened

last time?" He asked. "Were you guys...together?"

Richie shook his head, "Not...romantically. It was just sex. Both in the office and outside the office. What I didn't know though, was that she had a fiance, and I was her side piece." Eddie watched as Richie's face twisted into something...sad. "It all came to a head at one of the magazine promotion nights. Her fiance showed up and punched me in the face and Bill...fuck he was mortified. It brought a lot of bad press to the magazine for a while until it finally blew over with some other scandal. After that though, Bill warned me for having any kind of relationship with anyone in the office."

"Oh," Eddie breathed, his heart plummeting into his stomach. Back when he thought Richie was in a secret relationship, or even when he thought he regretted what they had done over the weekend, he was just angry. Now- now he was just sad. "So- so where does this leave us?"

"I- I really like you Eddie. Like- more than I have ever liked anyone in such a long long time. I just- if we told Bill then at the end of it, one of us would lose our job and...and you just got this job." Richie looked as though he wanted to pull his hair out. "I can't do that to you, no matter how much I like you."

He leaned over, pressing a light kiss to Eddie's cheek before he stepped to the side, ready to leave and walk out of Eddie's personal life.. Eddie paused, biting his lip as he thought over his options. Was a job really worth losing something that Eddie knew deep down was special? Not quite ready to end what had barely just begun, Eddie reached a hand out, stopping Richie from leaving.

"Wait."

Richie turned back around, his eyes laced with confusion and Eddie stepped closer, closing the distance between them. "Eds what?"

Eddie shhed him, wrapping his arms around Richie's neck and moving his head closer so their lips were just grazing over each other. "What Bill doesn't know won't hurt him, right?" He breathed. "I don't know about you but...this seems to special to just...let slip?"

“Fuck,” Richie breathed and for a brief moment, Eddie was sure he was going to turn him down. Then, he smiled, finally closing the distance between their lips, kissing Eddie deeply, his arms wrapping around his waist. “You’ll be the death of me, Eddie Kaspbrak,” he mumbled.

Eddie didn’t respond, he just pulled Richie back down into another kiss, tangling his fingers into Richie’s hair, “Come back to mine?” He breathed against his lips. “Please?”

With a reluctant whine, Richie pulled back and nodded his head, “Yeah- fuck. Yeah.” He swallowed thickly. “We can’t - we can’t be seen leaving together though, so you leave first and I’ll follow okay?”

“Okay- yeah.” Eddie nodded. “Wait- what about the cameras? Surely this place has CCTV of some kind?”

Richie laughed, a sheepish look on his face, “Yeah uh, yeah we do but not in this corridor. Not after Mike and I smashed the camera throwing a ball back and forth. Bill just hasn’t gotten it fixed yet. Which was why I chose this particular closet to pull you into.”

“How romantic,” Eddie rolled his eyes. “It’s kind of ironic, an openly gay man hiding with his secret lover in a closet,” he laughed at his own joke. “Get it?”

With a roll of his eyes, Richie pushed Eddie towards the door, “Oh I get it, you’re absolutely hilarious, Eds,” he winked. “I’ll see you at your place yeah? Let’s say...in an hour?”

Eddie nodded, giving Richie one last lingering kiss before he left the closer, fixing his bag once more and heading to the exit. Beverly was outside, smoking a cigarette as he passed through the turnstile and she gave him a wave, followed by a wink. That was when he realised that he also knew who she was, she was the girl Richie was with at the bar.

“Bev-” He started but Beverly shook her head, holding a finger up to her lips.

“Your secret is safe with me.” She smiled, stubbing out the cigarette

and heading towards the subway station. "See you tomorrow, Eddie!"

Eddie watched her leave before he shook himself out of his thoughts and hailed a cab to his apartment. He rushed around, quickly tidying up the odd bits and bobs he had left strewn across the floor and on the coffee table, before jumping into a shower.

By the time he came out and changed into something nice, Richie was knocking on his door. Eddie grinned and opened the door, gasping as he was greeted with a kiss and a light shove back into his apartment, the door closing behind Richie. Eddie laughed as he was crowded against the wall, burying his hand into Richie's hair, "Easy tiger," he breathed.

"Everything okay?" Richie asked, dragging his lips down Eddie's jaw to his neck. "You want to stop?"

"Definitely not," Eddie breathed, "But I do- do think we should talk about what we're going to do?" He pulled away and looked at Richie, who nodded his head and stepped back, leading them over to the couch. "So we- we're really going to do this? The whole secret relationship thing?"

Richie blinked and placed a hand on Eddie's thigh, squeezing it softly as he smiled, "I'm in if you're in. I like you, Eddie. I really think...if we let it...this could go somewhere. I meant what I said on Friday, I want to see you again, all the time. I want to take you out on dates and spend nights in getting to know each other."

"I never took you for a hopeless romantic," Eddie giggled, moving to sit on Richie's lap, wrapping his arms around his neck. "I want that too, we just...we need to be really careful. Go away out of town for our dates, or spend time in our apartments. I know it's not ideal but...it's what we have to work with right? And we want to make this work, don't we?"

With a nod of his head, Richie pressed a light kiss to Eddie's lips, holding his hips gently, "I definitely want to make this work. I don't care if we have dates in a fancy restaurant or here in our apartments in our pyjamas. As long as I'm spending time with you, then it'll be amazing."



“Cheesy,” Eddie laughed, but he wasn’t about to complain. The last relationship he was in was definitely not like this one, there was barely any romance and soon enough the spark had just...disappeared. Eddie really didn’t want that to happen with Richie. “You want to watch a movie and eat chinese food with me?”

Richie’s eyes sparkled, “Is this our first date?” He asked, brushing their lips together again and Eddie hummed, nodding his head. “In that case, you order the food and I’ll pick the movie. I hope you love cheesy rom-coms.”

Eddie gasped, covering a hand over his heart, “We really are a perfect match! I *love* cheesy rom coms!” He moved to get off of Richie’s lap, kissing his cheek. “I think we’re going to get on just great.”

“Oh baby, I *know* so.”

### 3. love shack

Richie yawned as he opened his eyes, stretching his long limbs out on the bed and sitting up. He brought his hands to his eyes, rubbing away the sleep before he turned his head to the side, a smile making its way onto his lips at the sight of his, still very much asleep, boyfriend. He let his eyes wander down over the expanse of Eddie's bare, tanned, back and even further to where the sheet just barely covered his ass.

"Stop staring at me, you creep," Eddie mumbled, his eyes still closed and Richie grinned even wider. He ignored him, leaning down to press a kiss to the dip in Eddie's back. "What are you doing you weirdo?" When Richie lifted his head, Eddie's eyes were open but he was still sleepy.

Wanting to keep Eddie in his relaxed state, Richie just leaned down to press a kiss to his lips, "Morning, baby," he breathed, running a hand through Eddie's curls. "Sleep well?"

"Mhm," Eddie nodded, rubbing his eyes and sitting up, leaning against the headboard of the bed. "What time is it?" He didn't even let Richie answer, glancing over himself towards the clock on the bedside table. "Thank god it's Saturday."

As much as Richie would have loved to allow Eddie to sleep in for the remainder of the morning, they had plans for the day. It was the weekend, and just like every other weekend they took the advantage of not having to work to go out of town to spend some time together, not hiding behind closed doors or drawn curtains. They had been seeing each other for just over two months now, and Richie was pretty proud of how well it was going.

It might have only been two months, but Richie was pretty sure he was falling head over heels in love with Eddie and unlike every other time, he was not terrified of what the outcome would be. Waking up to Eddie every morning, seeing him fast asleep next to him and just... being domestic with him? Richie wanted that all day every day. He never wanted it to end.

"I think this is the quietest you've been since we met," Eddie spoke up, staring at Richie with his head tilted to the side. God, he was so stunning that it made Richie's insides flip. "You okay, Rich?" He asked, moving across the bed so he was sitting right next to him, skin pressed against skin.

Unable to help himself, Richie lifted his hand and cupped Eddie's cheek, bringing their lips together in a soft kiss, not caring about morning breath. "You just look so beautiful in the morning, Eds. Just wanted to admire you, that's all."

Eddie blinked at him and rolled his eyes just a little bit, "You are such a sap Richie Tozier, I swear to god." He moved to get out of bed but Richie reached out, wrapping a hand around Eddie's wrist and pulling him back. "Richie! We can't waste time, we need to go." Richie just laughed and pressed his lips to Eddie's cheek and let him go.

He smiled softly as Eddie rolled out of bed and headed towards the bathroom. Within a few seconds the shower turned on and Richie collapsed back against the bed, a shit eating grin on his face. He never thought that he would ever have this kind of relationship with anyone, never mind someone as amazing as Eddie. A part of him wanted to jump into the shower with him, but he knew that Eddie was right, they didn't have time to waste here at the apartment and they could get down and dirty at the cabin in upstate.

A few moments passed before Eddie emerged from the bathroom, his hair damp and a towel wrapped around his hips. Richie let out a groan and covered his eyes with his hands, ignoring Eddie's giggle as he changed into his clothes for the day. "I am so fucking lucky," Richie groaned, peaking out from behind his fingers to see Eddie slide his jeans over his ass. "Damn."

"Come on asshole, get up, we need to get going," Eddie muttered, making sure they had all of their stuff in the bags. It was a holiday on Monday, so the office was closed for both Monday and Tuesday, allowing them a long weekend. "I don't want to waste any time, so let's go."

Richie rolled his eyes for a moment before he nodded and slipped off

of the bed, pulling his shoes on. He had showered the night before, just so he didn't have to wake up so early. "Alright Eduardo," he winked, pulling his jacket on and grabbing his keys. "Let's go."

After making sure that there were no-one looking, they slipped into the car, Richie in the driver's seat, and made their way to the cabin in upstate. It was a place that Richie had purchased when he was in college, as it was on sale and he wanted it to be a place of relaxation. He had never taken anyone there, had never wanted to, until Eddie.

The drive didn't take that long, and it was still light out when they pulled up outside the cabin. Eddie had fallen asleep half-way through the drive and he was still sound asleep when they arrived. Richie reached over and gently shook him awake, smiling down at him when he opened his eyes. "Hey, we're here."

"Already?" Eddie asked, rubbing his eyes as he looked out the window towards the cabin. "Holy- oh my god," he breathed, opening the door and sliding out so he could get a better look at the place. "This- this is the cabin you were talking about?" He asked.

Richie nodded his head, walking around the car to stand next to Eddie and look up at the cabin, "Yeah, this is it. This is the cabin I've been telling you about this whole time. Do you like it?" He asked, biting down on his lip nervously. He didn't realise until that moment how much he needed Eddie to love this place, just as much as he did.

In response, Eddie moved closer, wrapping his arms around Richie's neck, playing with the hair on the back of his head, pushing up on his toes. "I love it." He closed the distance between their lips, kissing him softly. "Now, why don't you take me inside and we can christen this place?"

With a grin, Richie reached down to pick Eddie up, allowing him to wrap his legs around Richie's waist. "As you wish."

\* \* \* \* \*

Eddie had to admit, Richie's cabin was more than he had ever thought it was going to be. It was bright, spacious and not at all what

he imagined. When Richie had told him that he had a cabin in Upstate New York, he imagined it to be all dusty and run down, not something out of a literal movie.

“When you told me you had a cabin in the woods, I was pretty sure I was about to get murdered,” Eddie mumbled as Richie stepped through the door, his legs still firmly wrapped around his waist. “But this place is actually really damn fancy.”

Richie chuckled, pressing his lips to Eddie’s neck, kissing the skin softly before setting him down on his feet. This gave him the chance to look around, glancing at all the furniture in the place and just how clean it was. It was clear that Richie either got cleaners to keep it tidy, or someone had been staying there recently. “Do you like it? I mean, the inside, not just the outside?” Richie asked, wrapping his arms around Eddie’s waist from behind.

He gave the place another look around, at the art on the walls and the cosy fireplace with the fluffy rug in the middle of the floor. It was homey feeling, very romantic. Eddie leaned back against Richie, his head on his shoulder and he smiled, “Just like I said outside, I love it. I still can’t believe you own this place though.”

“I just got lucky,” Richie laughed, kissing his head. “The place was going to be torn down and the owners were selling it for really cheap because it was in such a lovely location and they didn’t want it to be demolished. So I bought it and my parents and the other losers helped me rebuild it all up and turn it into what you are standing in today.” Eddie turned around as Richie continued to talk. “I rent it out to some people too, who want to vacation up here and need a cheap place to stay.”

Eddie whistled low, wrapping his arms around Richie’s neck, smiling softly. “You really did an amazing job, I love it.” He stepped back after a few moments and moved over to the couch, flopping back onto it and letting out a long breath. He hated how tired long distance driving made him feel. “Are we doing anything tonight, or are we going to Netflix and Chill?”

“Netflix and chill?” Richie asked, a laugh bubbling out of his throat. “Did you seriously just say that?” Eddie raised an eyebrow at him,

nodding his head but he couldn't hold back the laugh. "Alright babe, Netflix and chill it is. Just let me set it up, okay?"

Nodding his head, Eddie left Richie to fiddle around with the TV and he used the time to explore the rest of the cabin. He walked into the kitchen, opening the fridge to find it fully stocked and everything was right at his fingertips. He was definitely going to make Richie some of his best homemade pancakes for breakfast in the morning. He moved away from the kitchen and made his way down the corridor to the master bedroom.

"Holy shit," Eddie breathed, looking around at how beautiful it was. The bed was a king size, taking up most of the first half of the room, and there was an ensuite to the left. The window was the full length of the wall, opening out into a veranda which had a table and chairs sitting out on it. There was also a barbecue sitting on the far end and... was that a hot tub?

Before Eddie could make his way back down to the main living area, a thought popped into his head. This place was the perfect romantic destination, perfect for a quiet getaway and a chance to be alone. How many people had Richie brought up here? How many people has he shared this bed, kitchen and hot tub with? He tried to banish the thoughts as he headed back down to meet Richie, who was grinning triumphantly after fixing up the TV.

"What movie do you want to watch, Eds?" Richie asked, passing him the remote. "I also have a whole storage of movies in the cabinet if nothing on Netflix suits your fancy." He lay back on the couch, patting his lap so Eddie could join him. Not wanting to ruin the mood with his sour thoughts, Eddie climbed onto Richie's lap and rested his head against his chest, scrolling through the movies.

He eventually settled on some cheesy Netflix Rom Com that they were suggesting, but even though it had a decent premise, Eddie's thoughts were elsewhere. It was about halfway through the movie, and Richie's fingers were drawing patterns on his back, that Eddie finally voiced his thoughts. "Hey, Rich?"

"Mhm?" Richie hummed, looking down at Eddie as he settled his chin on Richie's chest. Eddie let out a breath as Richie carded his

fingers through his curls and down the skin of his face. “What’s up baby?”

Eddie pursed his lips, trying to think of the best way to approach the subject without possibly ruining their whole trip. He sat up a little, rubbing his eyes as he adjusted to the darkness of the room. “How many- uh... dates have you brought up here?” he asked.

Richie blinked and looked at Eddie as though he had grown an extra head, “Is this what’s been bothering you all night, Eds?” He asked. “You’ve been worried that this is... something I do with my possible dates?” Slowly, Eddie nodded his head and Richie reached for his hand, squeezing it. “You’re the first person I’ve ever been romantically involved with that I brought here. This place is important to me, and only people who are important to me get to see it. You don’t have to worry, okay?”

Just like that, all the tension Eddie had been feeling up until then melted away and he moved closer so he was straddling Richie’s lap, his arms loose around his neck. “I’m sorry,” he whispered, closing the distance between their lips and kissing him softly, lovingly. “You want to watch the rest of the movie, or do you want to go to bed?”

“No offence Eds, but I am exhausted. I don’t think I would be able to give you all the love that you deserve,” Richie hummed and Eddie nodded his head, pressing a kiss to his neck. “But going to bed to *sleep* , is something I can definitely go for.”

Eddie just laughed, dragging Richie back to the bedroom. To sleep, of course.

\* \* \* \* \*

Richie woke up the following morning to the smell of pancakes coming from the kitchen. His nose twitched and his stomach growled, causing him to roll out of bed in his boxers, going in search of the smell of the amazing food. The sight that greeted him when he entered the kitchen was a sight to behold. Eddie was only in his boxers also, hips swaying to the music coming from the stereo on the windowsill.

Not wanting to disrupt him just yet, Richie crossed his arms and leaned against the door frame, grinning at his boyfriend. He looked so relaxed and happy that Richie didn't want to interrupt him, but the growling in his stomach told him otherwise so he sighed and stepped forward.

"Morning, handsome," Richie hummed, wrapping his arms around Eddie's waist and burying his nose into his neck. It was insane how good Eddie smelled all the time, even first thing in the morning. "What are you making?"

Eddie turned his head around, a smile on his lips. "Pancakes. It's an old homemade recipe so I really hope you like it. These are very important to me, just so you know." He reached over for one sitting on the plate, passing it to Richie. He grinned and took a bite into the pancake, groaning at the taste that exploded in his mouth.

"Holy-" Richie moaned around his mouthful, swallowing it and grinning at Eddie with so much brightness in his eyes. "Damn, Eds, these are the fucking shit, my god." He planted a wet kiss to Eddie's cheek and stepped back to give him the room to work. "What do you want to do today?"

Finishing off the last batch of pancakes, Eddie turned off the stove and turned his attention back to Richie, sitting the stacked plate on the table along with a jug of orange juice. Richie watched as he paused by the chair before shrugging and climbing onto Richie's lap. "We can go into town?" He suggested, kissing him softly. There was no need for them to hide here, they could be completely open about their relationship here and he loved it.

"Town?" Richie asked again, grabbing another pancake and taking a bite. He waited until it was gone before he swallowed. "Of course, we can go into town if you want to. We can do anything you want to do, Eds. Anything at all." He meant every word of that, anything that Eddie wanted, Richie would make sure Eddie got.

Eddie nodded his head in agreement, giving Richie a kiss on the cheek before he stood up and disappeared down the hall to the bedroom, probably to change. He waited for a few moments before he followed him, and true enough Eddie was getting dressed in a nice



sweater and a pair of his fancy jeans.

Once the two of them were dressed, Richie held out his hand and Eddie laced their fingers together, settling into Richie's side as they walked out of the cabin and towards the small town that the cabin was located on the outskirts of. It was a small town, population of about 1000 people, with a few vintage shops and a tearoom. There wasn't much to do, not really, but it was the fact that they could walk around without having to hide that was the selling point for the two of them.

"This is really nice," Eddie whispered as they walked past the shops, pausing to look in the windows occasionally. They weren't interested in buying anything, but it didn't hurt to look. "Being able to hold hands and not worry about who might see us, isn't it?"

Richie nodded his head and pressed a kiss to Eddie's hair as they walked, stopping outside the tearoom, "You know it baby, and we can come up here whenever we want. If we need some time to just be us, this place will always be here."

With a smile, Eddie tugged him into the tearoom, where they had a lovely dinner together, completely stress free. When it was starting to get a little dark, they began to make their way back to the cabin, hand in hand and pressed up against one another. By the time they actually made it back Eddie was yawning and Richie could barely keep his eyes open.

"God I am so sleepy," Eddie yawned, slipping off his shoes and hanging up his jacket. He took a seat on the sofa and closed his eyes, Richie following in his footsteps, taking a seat next to Eddie and pulling him into his lap. "Why are you always so warm?"

"I'm a human heater, that's why," Richie laughed, pulling the blanket over their bodies and flicking on the TV, choosing a random movie. He moved a hand slowly up and down Eddie's back, soothing him into a soft, comfortable sleep. It didn't take long, but soon Eddie was fast asleep, breathing slowly against Richie's neck.

Richie waited out the whole movie, keeping a secure arm around Eddie, holding him close. When the movie was finished, he turned off

the TV and carefully picked Eddie up, carrying him into the bedroom and helping him take off his clothes so he could tuck him under the sheets.

“Rich?” Eddie mumbled, blinking open his eyes as Richie pulled back the sheets to climb into the bed, wrapping his arms around Eddie’s waist. “What time is it?”

“Just after eleven,” Richie breathed, pressing a kiss into Eddie’s hair. “Go to sleep Eds, it’s been a long day.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“Best two out of three?” Richie asked and Eddie couldn’t help the grin that spread out on his lips, rolling his eyes. They were sat on the soft rug by the fire, in nothing but their underwear, playing UNO. Which Eddie was totally destroying Richie in. “Come on, Eds. Give me a chance at least.”

Eddie laughed, raising his eyebrows and shaking his head, “Why would I want to do that? Letting you win is terrible life advice. Is this what your friends do? Do you bat your eyelashes and they bend to your every will?” He asked and cackled when Richie looked away. “Oh my god, you actually do!”

“Hey!” Richie rolled his eyes, pushing the cards out of the way and crowding over Eddie, allowing him to fall back onto the rug. “Don’t sit there and say that my fluttering eyelashes don’t do anything for you, or do we need to have a reminder of the hot chocolate incident?”

With a laugh, Eddie let his head fall back against the rug, a flush rising up on his cheeks. Richie was totally right, all he had to do was bat his eyelashes and Eddie had rushed to the kitchen to make him hot chocolate. However, he was not going to let him win a game of cards, nope, no way. “Asshole, that’s totally different. I’m not going to let you win cards, end of conversation.”

Richie pursed his lips and pouted, but sat back anyway, “Alright, alright fine. Then I’m not playing anymore. Can we do something else?” He asked and Eddie tilted his head to the side in a question of,

like what? “Like, go in the hot tub?”

That peaked Eddie’s interest and he nodded his head, already standing up and making his way to the back of the cabin to the bedroom where the hot tub was located. He pulled on a robe, stepping out onto the decking and plugging in the hot-tub, putting it on. The bubbles started almost immediately and he turned his head, spotting Richie behind him as he shrugged off the robe and slipped into the warm water.

His boyfriend followed close behind him, sighing as he relaxed. Eddie watched him carefully, a soft smile on his lips at how beautiful he was and he was all his. Slowly, Eddie moved over so he was sitting in Richie’s lap, his arms wrapped around his neck, playing with the hair that was already soaked with water. “Thank you, Rich.”

“Mhm, what for?” Richie asked, trailing his fingers up and down Eddie’s spine causing him to occasionally shiver. “What did I do?”

“You brought me here,” Eddie replied softly, pressing a kiss to Richie’s neck, his hands moving over his torso under the water. “I feel honoured to be the only person you ever brought here, makes me feel special.”

Richie tilted his head to the side and cupped Eddie’s cheek, tilting his head up so their eyes could meet, “You are special, Eds. To me, you are the best thing in my life right now. Like I said, I have never been with anyone I wanted to bring up here, until you. So yeah, you’re special.”

Instead of answering Richie with words, Eddie sealed his lips over his, pulling them into a kiss. It was soft at first, but as Richie moved his hands into Eddie’s hair, tugging a little to bring him closer, it turned more heated and desperate. When the need to breathe became too much, Eddie pulled back, but not too far so they were basically panting into Richie’s mouth. He could feel himself getting hard in his underwear, and he let a whine out into Richie’s mouth.

“What do you need baby?” Richie breathed, his eyes dark and lustful. “Do you need me to touch you?”

Eddie nodded his head, tugging on Richie's hair as he settled more into his lap, basically glued to him. "Please, Richie. Fuck I need to feel you, please?"

There was no room for teasing, not at that moment anyway. Richie dipped his hand into Eddie's soaked underwear, wrapping it around his shaft and stroking him slowly. Eddie's breath hitched and he moved his own hand to Richie's growing erection, stroking him at the same rhythm of his own hand movements.

It was obvious that they both weren't going to last long, they were too strung up in the feeling, and the hot water from the hot tub was only adding to their lustful mood. Eddie moved his lips to Richie's neck, kissing the skin and panting heavily as he felt Richie take him higher and higher. Just like he assumed, he reached his peak within a few strokes, coming into his pants and over Richie's hand. "O-Oh god fuck- fuck Rich..."

He kept up his own hand movements against Richie's erection, and grinned as he reached his own climax, coming over Eddie's own hand and they slumped against each other, the only noise filling the silence was their breathing. Eventually, Richie came too first, kissing Eddie's hair, "That was amazing," he whispered. "I think we should get out and cleaned up though."

Nodding his head, Eddie moved off of Richie's lap and climbed out of bed, making his way to the bathroom. He paused by the door and turned to see Richie watching him as he stepped back into the bedroom. "You coming or what?"

Richie grinned and followed him into the bathroom, closing the door softly behind him.

#### **4. total eclipse of the heart**

As Richie pulled up outside of Eddie's apartment building late on the Tuesday night, he let out a sigh. Even though he knew that there was no way they could be open and public about their relationship, it didn't mean Richie didn't think about it. All the time in fact. Their trip to the cabin, and exploring the town without worrying who might see them gave Richie a glance into what could be if they came clean.

The only thing stopping them from doing so was that one of them would lose their job in the process and neither of them wanted that. After all, Eddie had only just started his job and Richie didn't want to risk him losing it.

"I suppose I'll see you in the office tomorrow?" He asked, turning off the engine as he waited for Eddie to get out of the car and head into his apartment. "Back to pretending we don't know each other, huh?"

Eddie rolled his eyes and leaned across the centre console, pressing a kiss to Richie's lips, "I'll see you tomorrow. Bright and early. Remember, I like an extra shot of caramel in my coffee."

Richie winked, "Roger that, handsome." With that, Eddie slipped out of the car and Richie took off down the street, heading for his own place. Normally he would stay up late, or even call Eddie back for a little phone sex, but he was so drained all he did the second he got home was pass out, still fully clothed, on his bed.

The following morning, the two of them walked into the office five minutes apart so as not to turn any heads. Richie settled into his chair, looking over at Eddie as he settled at his own desk, flicking through the letters sitting in a pile.

The morning passed fairly quickly, but when Eddie returned from his lunchtime walk, his hair windswept and looking like Richie had been running his fingers through it, the afternoon became a whole lot more difficult. All Richie wanted to do was drag Eddie into that closet and push him up against the wall, kiss his lips over and over again until they were breathless.

It was risky, Richie knew that, being together at work when Bill was only a few doors down the hall. If Bill caught them, it would be nothing but crap for the two of them, and Eddie was thriving in his role, Richie could let anything happen to that. He would never forgive himself.

A ping from his email caught him off guard and he turned his attention back to the computer screen. He noticed that it was an email from Eddie and a grin spread out on his lips as he opened it.

**[From Eddie.]** Stop staring. I can feel your eyes on me from here.

**[From Richie.]** Can't help it, sorry.

**[From Eddie.]** Closet in five minutes?

Richie licked his lips and looked over at Eddie from above his computer screen. Their eyes met and Eddie raised his eyebrows in a challenge, making Richie swallow thickly and type back out a response.

**[From Richie.]** You got it.

He watched Eddie carefully as he got up out of his seat and left his desk, walking out of the main office and towards the hallway where the closet was. As soon as he was out of sight, Richie counted down four minutes before he slipped out of his chair, heading to the closet.

The second he opened the door, Eddie pulled him in by the collar of his shirt and pressed their lips together in a heated kiss. Richie yelped a little, making sure the door was closed properly before he was shoved up against the wall, Eddie's knee between his thighs.

"Damn, Eds, what's gotten into you?" Richie panted into his mouth, sealing their lips back together. "Not that I'm complaining."

Eddie pulled back, his fingers playing with the hem of Richie's shirt as he pushed it up his stomach, hands roaming over his skin, "I just wanted to see you," he breathed. "I hate that we can't be...together out there. Sometimes I just want to kiss you, touch you. You know?"

The expression on Richie's face softened and he cupped Eddie's

cheeks, pressing their lips together in a much softer kiss. "Eds, I-" he cleared his throat. "I know that we haven't been seeing each other for all that long, and that this isn't exactly the most romantic place but-but I love you."

Lips were pressed against Richie's the second the words had left his mouth and Eddie wrapped his arms around his neck, pulling him even closer. "I- I love you too. I know it's crazy, I know it's probably really stupid because we barely know each other but- god you make me feel things that no-one has ever made me feel before. I feel alive when I'm with you, even when you drive me up the wall with your lame ass jokes."

"Hey! You love my lame ass jokes!" Richie laughed, running his thumb over Eddie's cheekbones. "We're crazy, you're right, but at least we're crazy together."

Eddie laughed softly and was about to lean in to give Richie another kiss, when the door handle rattled from the other side. "Shit," he breathed and Richie's eyes widened.

"I think this door is jammed again," Mike sighed from the other side, giving the handle another rattle. "We should get Victor to come and have another look at it, and maybe when he's here get that CCTV fixed too. It's been broken for way too long."

Richie cursed under his breath at Mike's words, but didn't say anything else until the footsteps walked down the corridor and back to the main office. Both of them let out a join exhale before fixing their clothes and hair, making sure not to draw any unwanted attention to them. "My place tonight?" Eddie asked and Richie nodded his head, kissing his hand.

"Tonight."

Eddie left the closet first and then Richie behind him not long after. He paused outside the door and made a scene of pushing the door open, letting out a whoop of victory and calling for Mike. A few seconds later, he appeared, a grin on his face. "Hey, you managed to open it! Well done Rich!"

With a shrug, Richie moved to step passed Mike, but he barely made it a few feet before a hand reached out to stop him. “What’s up Mike?” He asked, tilting his head to the side. There was something...off about the look Mike was giving him.

“Be careful Richie,” Mike whispered, voice soft and low. “You- you need to be careful, you know that right?” He asked and Richie felt his whole body go ice cold. There was no way Mike knew, was there? Were they getting careless? Before he could even ask, Mike pointed to his shirt. “Your shirt is untucked, and so was Eddie’s. If Bill finds out...”

Richie cut him off with a violent shake of his head, “Don’t- don’t tell him Mikey. Please don’t tell him. I- Eddie and I we- we really like each other okay? This isn’t what it was like before, we met before I found out he was Bill’s new hire. Please-”

Shaking his head, Mike put a hand on his shoulder, “Breathe, I’m not going to tell anyone. I’m just saying that you need to be more careful, if you don’t want Bill finding out. Okay?” He gave Richie one final look before he headed into the closet in search of what he needed.

The whole talk left a sour taste in Richie’s mouth as he walked back to his desk. He didn’t want Eddie to lose his job because Richie was getting careless with their meet-ups. As he made his way to his desk, he met Eddie’s eyes across the office, biting his lip at the worried look. When he sat down there was a few messages from Eddie on his phone and he swallowed thickly.

**[Eds <3]** What’s going on?

**[Eds <3]** Richie? Did Mike say something to you?

**[Eds <3]** Babe?

**[Rich]** Mike knows.

He watched as Eddie’s face paled when he received the text and looked up, their eyes meeting once more. He could see the fear in Eddie’s eyes and Richie had to eventually look away, closing his eyes as a wave of sickness washed over him. That night he knew there was



going to be a much more serious talk than they had ever had before.

\* \* \* \* \*

Richie went home first, showered and changed into something more comfortable before he headed over to Eddie's place. He barely knocked on the door before Eddie opened it up and he stepped into the apartment, closing the door behind him. The atmosphere in the hallway was tense, making Richie glance down at his feet, shaking a little.

"Eds..." he started but Eddie cut him off by wrapping his arms around Richie's waist, settling his head on his chest. "Eds?"

"Is he going to tell anyone?" Eddie asked after a few moments, tightening his arms around Richie and pressing a kiss to his shirt. "Are we screwed?"

Shaking his head, Richie pressed a kiss to Eddie's hair, "No, no Mike isn't going to tell anyone. He wouldn't. He just- wanted to warn me to be careful. For us to be careful." If he knew then it wouldn't be too hard for Bill to find out and if he did then there would be nothing but carnage. "Eds I- I know this isn't ideal."

"No-" Eddie cut him off, gripping onto his shirt with his fists. "I'm going to stop you right there, we- we aren't having this conversation. No- not after we just- told each other we love each other. You can't break up with me."

Richie felt a sob rise in his throat and he choked a little, "I don't- I don't want to break up with you Eds. No- that's the last thing that I want to do. I just- I just can't let Bill find out and for you to lose your job. I mean, this job is perfect for you."

"Why should any of us have to give up our jobs!" Eddie snapped, raising his voice a little and stepping back. "Why should we have to hide and lie about how we feel about each other. Why does Bill have so much control over our relationship? I'm sorry but it's fucked up Richie, you need to admit that."

A scoff left Richie's lips and he rolled his eyes a little, "Of course I

know it's fucked up, Eds, but what do you want me to do? Walk into Bill's office tomorrow and tell him that you and I have been seeing each other, risking both of our jobs?"

Eddie blinked at him and stepped back further, "Richie, I'd rather lose my job than have my boss feel that he can control who I can date and who I can not date."

Tears were in Eddie's eyes at this point, slowly making their way down his cheeks and Richie sighed, stepping forward, pulling him close. "I'm sorry, I just don't want to ruin this. I don't want Bill to fire you- or make me choose."

"Again," Eddie whispered, his voice a lot more softer than before. "We shouldn't have to be put in that position."

Richie swallowed thickly, "Do you- do you want to keep seeing me?" He asked and Eddie looked up at him through his eyelashes, looking absolutely stunning. "I would completely understand if you don't."

"Don't be silly," Eddie breathed, leaning up closer and ghosting his lips over Richie's. "I meant when I said I loved you. I'm not going to just- stop this because of a little hardship. I'm in this for the long haul." They pressed their foreheads together and in that moment, Richie was so damn crazy about this man, it was insane.

He just needed to hope that Bill would understand, if he ever ever found out.

\* \* \* \* \*

Eddie was the first one to arrive at the office the following morning, waving hello to Stan and Mike as he made his way to his desk. He hoped that Mike wouldn't approach him about the day before, and he was on extra high alert not to spark any unwanted attention towards him and Richie. He sat down at his desk and brought up his letters he still had to answer for this week's column.

A stuttered gasp left his lips as he read the most recent mail in his inbox, his cheeks going red at the coincidence that was right in front of him.

*Dear Eddie,*

*I'm having a bit of a dilemma here, actually. It's complicated which is why I have put a fake name and a burner email address. The last thing I'd want is for anyone to come back to me about this. The thing is, I am in love. The guy I'm seeing is pretty amazing actually, he's smart and he makes me laugh more than anyone ever has. He makes me really happy. The only thing is that we work in the same place and we love our job, a lot actually. However, the place has a 'no employees dating' rule, which means we need to keep our relationship a secret. We've been together for over a year now, and not being able to go public is starting to form cracks in our relationship, cracks that would never be there if we were allowed to see each other freely without being caught. I don't want to break up with him, because I love him, but I'm really scared that if we keep going the way we are, then stress will pull us apart and I'll lose him both as a boyfriend, but also as a friend. What should I do?*

*Yours,*

*Elena*

Eddie lost count of how many times he had read over the email, again and again and again. Elena was in the exact same situation he was in, therefore his answer was going to be from the heart. He found himself nibbling on his nails as he thought about what to say, and how to word it. Would he be able to give someone his advice without taking it himself? Eddie just hoped that she would be braver than he was, and take the bull by the horns.

**Elena,**

**It seems that you have found yourself in a very complex situation, and I am afraid that all I can really do here is give you my opinion on what you should do, other than my solid advice. It is such a tricky subject to approach, as you value not only your job, but your relationship with your boyfriend as well. I'm not going to beat around the bush here, as you probably just really want to know what I have to say, so here it is. I think you should both speak to your boss. Explain the situation to them and that you have been dating for over a year, and it hasn't affected your work in the slightest. In my opinion, it's not up to**

the boss of a company who their employees can date or not date, but of course some of them believe that it is their place to decide. I really don't have anything else I can say to you, other than good luck, and I hope it works out for the both of you and your jobs.

Yours,

**Eddie (*Agony Aunt*)**

Once the reply was done, Eddie read over it a few times to make sure he hadn't missed anything or said something out of line. When he was sure it was perfect, he added the story to the column and focused on answering another few for the column before submitting it to Richie for editing. He knew that as soon as Richie read over that first reply, he'd either get a message or they'd speak about it that evening. He turned his attention back to his screen just as he felt a presence next to him. He looked up to see Bill, grinning at him.

"How are you fitting in Eddie? Enjoying working on the column?" Bill asked, leaning against his desk as he sipped his coffee. "I know it can be hard, fitting in at a new workplace, getting to know people."

Eddie smiled, picking at his cuticles as he nervously looked at his boss. He was so high strung with the secret, that he had to try and not freak out when Bill spoke to him. If he made it obvious that something was wrong, then Bill would surely catch on quick enough. He wasn't stupid. "Everything is great, everyone is very welcoming."

Bill smiled brightly once more and nodded his head, "Good, we have a good team going on here, which is great. You'll be joining us next week for the team meeting right? I've added it to your calendar." Eddie nodded as he looked at his calendar and accepted the meeting request. "Great, okay. I have to go to another meeting, but if you have any issues, I'm sure the team will help you out!"

As fast as he had arrived, Bill was gone, disappearing back into his office and Eddie sagged back against his seat. Why was he so nervous? Why the fuck did he have to be scared of being in a relationship with someone? It wasn't fair. He looked up, hoping to catch Richie's gaze, but he was disappointed to find that he wasn't

even at his desk.

Richie was absent for the whole morning, which made Eddie's stomach clench with worry. He sent him a few texts, asking if he was okay and where he was, but they weren't even opened. It wasn't until lunchtime that Richie appeared back at his desk, windswept and hair dripping from the rain. The second that he made for the kitchen, Eddie followed him.

"Where were you?" Eddie asked worriedly, and Richie turned around, a small smile on his lips. "I sent you a few messages but you haven't even read them."

At that, Richie pulled his phone out and groaned, turning it around to show a black screen, "Looks like my phone died," he chuckled. "Sorry Eds, Bill asked me to stand in for him at an editorial meeting for a possible client this morning. I only found out when I arrived and I had to practically turn on my heel and walk back out. I wanted to come by and tell you but you were busy."

Eddie breathed out a sigh of relief and flicked the kettle on to boil. "Sorry, I didn't mean to get all serious and detective questionnaire on you." He focused on making two cups of tea, one how he liked it and another how Richie liked it.

"I like it when you worry. It shows that you care." Richie grinned and Eddie rolled his eyes, passing him the cup. "How was your morning?"

"I got a very interesting question this morning," Eddie admitted. "I sent it to you for editing with the rest of my column, read it and let me know what you think." With that, he left the kitchen and headed back to his desk for lunch.

Richie followed him out a few moments later and Eddie watched him boot up his computer in search for Eddie's submission. Eddie knew the exact moment that Richie read the article as his eyes widened and he looked up, their eyes locking across the room. No less than a minute later, his phone pinged with a message.

**[Rich]** Damn, that's freaky.

**[Eds <3]** Right? Was my reply too much?

**[Rich]** Nah it was perfect baby. Only wish we could actually follow your amazing advice.

**[Eds <3]** Yeah, I know.

The rest of the afternoon passed by relatively quickly and soon it was hitting five in the afternoon and Eddie was logging off for the day. His head hurt just a little from all the thinking he had been doing and he was looking forward to a nice relaxing night in with his boyfriend.

Unfortunately, it seemed that Richie had other ideas. Once Eddie had been home and showered, he made his way over to Richie's place, only to find him standing with his coat and shoes on. "Going somewhere?" Eddie asked, tilting his head to the side. They hadn't planned to go out.

"Oh yes, I am planning on treating my amazing boyfriend to a very nice dinner at a very nice restaurant tonight." Richie explained with a grin. "I know it's risky, but it's one meal out. I'm fed up with having to have dates inside and I'm sure we have watched every Netflix Original there is, so indulge me."

Eddie bit his lip but eventually nodded his head in agreement. He wanted to be able to have a real dinner out with Richie too and he wasn't going to let Bill Denbrough stop him. He reached out, lacing their fingers together as they made their way to the restaurant.

"My, this really is fancy," Eddie laughed as they were seated and offered the wine list. Even though it was a Thursday, Eddie was going to go all out for the date and have a glass. "Who recommended this?"

Richie laughed, "Bev did actually," he smiled. "She found it a few weeks ago and said I should bring you. I've been working up the courage to bring you here since then, as you know, risks and all that."

Eddie laughed, his cheeks rosy from the wine he had been drinking. It was nice, being out in public with Richie like this. It made him feel

like they were a real couple and not some dirty little secret behind closed doors. The evening was overall one of the best evenings Eddie had ever been on, and he was sure that nothing could ruin his good mood.

That is, until they walked into work the following morning to find a very angry Bill standing in front of a smug Greta Keene, holding a printed off photo of the two of them kissing outside of the restaurant. He was red in the face, looking right past Eddie at Richie who was frozen still next to him. It was like Eddie's whole world was crumbling down in one swift movement.

"You two have been seeing each other?" Bill asked, eyes dark and a snarl on his face. "Richie. My office. Now."

They were so fucking screwed.